

**MURRAY PARKS AND RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD**

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Board Members in Attendance

Morgan Selph, Chair

Bob VanBibber

Dani Murakami

Ted Eyre

Excused: Lisa Nelson, Vice Chair

Staff

Doug Hill

The Parks & Recreation Board Meeting was called to order at 5:35pm by Chair, Morgan Selph.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ted Eyre made a motion to approve the September 9, 2009 board minutes as written. Bob Vanbibber seconded. Motion was unanimous.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

No citizens.

REQUEST BY MURRAY HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL TEAM TO DISPLAY ADVERTISING BANNERS ON MURRAY PARK SOFTBALL FIELD

Stephanie Cooley, Lynette Johnson, and Sandy Parks attended the meeting, representing Murray Girls Softball and their request to display advertising signs on the softball field in an effort to raise funds for new uniforms.

Stephanie Cooley showed the board members a picture of the softball team wearing the uniforms they would like to replace. She indicated that the existing uniforms are approximately 12-15 years old and are very worn and have been mended often. Stephanie said they would like to purchase 25-30 new uniforms. The group is hoping that businesses would be more willing to donate money if they were able to advertise their business on a banner hung on the softball field.

Bob Vanbibber stated that he was involved with Murray Liberty League at Grant Park for 14 years, and that the league depended upon donations from businesses to survive and to keep the costs as low as possible for the players. He reported that they were able to raise a substantial amount of dollars, and that they had approximately 15 outfield fence signs made of vinyl. Bob Vanbibber said he felt this was a great benefit to the league and that the same type advertising is seen at Ken Price and other schools and parks in the valley.

The board members asked various questions regarding how long the signs would be up, how the signs would be positioned on the fence, what other leagues might be playing during the time the signs were up, and whether or not the city had ordinances regarding signage in the park.

Doug Hill reported that the city did have an ordinance regarding advertising. The ordinance states that advertising on city property or parks is prohibited unless approval is obtained from the Public Services Director and Mayor. Doug stated that as staff there has been a resistance toward advertising for programs in parks. However, he said there are places where advertising has been allowed (Ken Price Ball Park, Grant Park, and Willow Pond Park). He explained that as the request from Murray Girls Softball was discussed with staff, it was felt that there was already a precedence established for this specific type of advertising. Because of this, Doug said that the staff has given a positive recommendation for this request.

Bob Vanbibber said that before the group voted on this request he wanted to say that, in his business of selling sporting goods to schools, they are being told by the schools that budgets will be restricted because of the economy, and that there will be a significant decrease in extracurricular activities, and people will have to become very creative in ways to supplement the athletic department. Bob Vanbibber said he felt that this signage was an excellent way to generate funds.

Morgan Selph asked if there would be other groups making this same request. He said he felt one of the beautiful things about Murray Park is that there isn't advertising. He asked the girls softball representatives if there would be a way to establish a slush fund which could grow over the years in order to have funds for uniform replacement. The group said the players already pay a substantial amount for the program, and that they would like to keep the cost down. Also, they are limited by the school board to two fund raisers a year.

Ted Eyre made a motion to approve the request of Murray Girls Softball to position signs on the outfield fence for the length of their season (March through May). Dani Murakami seconded the motion. Board was unanimous. Doug said that this recommendation would be taken to the Mayor.

TOSH FIELD CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, COST ESTIMATE, AND CITY PARTICIPATION

Doug Hill had given the board members a packet containing a conceptual design of the TOSH field and a cost estimate. The project is estimated at \$1.4 million, with synthetic turf being approximately \$400,000 more than bluegrass turf.

Doug said that in discussions with TOSH, they are only willing to commit to a 10-year lease with the possibility of a renewable lease after that time. Doug said that after these discussions, staff recommendation to the board is that the city not move forward with the TOSH property proposal with the limited lease commitment.

Doug said that the city owns property which is currently vacant at this time. To make this much investment in athletic fields, Doug said it would make more sense to invest on city owned property. Bob Vanbibber asked if TOSH would have reimbursed Murray City for any improvements made to the property when the lease expired. Doug said that there was discussion of a prorated reimbursement or perhaps an investment up front. TOSH was also hopeful that some grant money or donations would be available to lower the overall costs. Doug said that all of this was speculative; however, it was still felt that the investment would be better spent on permanent property.

Bob Vanbibber made a motion to agree with city staff to not proceed with the TOSH proposal for an athletic field on their property due to costs involved and the limited lease commitment. Ted Eyre seconded. Board was unanimous.

REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY FOR MURRAY HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER FIELD

Doug gave the board a handout of a map showing undeveloped property the city owns. The property was donated by UDOT to Murray City as part of the I-215 freeway construction several years ago. This property is located adjacent to I-215 just west of the Jordan River and west of Willow Pond Park. It is about 3.2 acres. Doug reported that about 15 years ago, the park board wanted to build a baseball field on the property; this was before Willow Pond Park was constructed. Doug said that this property currently has no access to it; this is still an issue for any future development.

Currently, there is a request from a gentleman, who is a soccer advocate, by the name of Ned Searle who wants to have a soccer field for the high school soccer team who currently uses city property. They would like to have a dedicated soccer field. His goal is to find property in Murray City to construct this field. He is not asking the city to fund this project, but he was aware that the city owned the property.

Doug reported that as staff, it is believed that city property should benefit the general public as a whole rather than just a specific group. Because of this, Doug said that staff is giving this request a negative recommendation. Morgan Selph felt that there would also be an issue of putting a soccer field and parking in a flood plain on the Jordan River. Doug said that this was also part of the negative recommendation.

Ted Eyre made a motion that whereas the board agrees with staff that city property should be used by the general public rather than by a specific group and whereas the proposed site is in the flood plain, the board denies the request that this property be used exclusively for the Murray High School soccer team. Bob Vanbiber seconded. Board was unanimous.

JORDAN RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION PROPOSAL

Doug said that he wanted the board to be aware that over the last two years there has been a group of planners, governmental officials, and citizens who have been working to create some renewed interest in all aspects of the Jordan River. He said that there was a survey done a year ago by Envision Utah called the Jordan River Blueprint that had some recommendations of what the Jordan River should look like. This was not officially adopted by Murray City, but some cities did adopt it as a guiding principal document for development and use of the Jordan River. Doug reported that coming from this effort was a group of individuals who wanted to create a commission whose sole focus was the Jordan River. He

said that there have been several groups who have tried to form a commission but have not been successful because they have not had authority or funding. Because of this, it has been left up to each jurisdiction along the river to do whatever they have wanted to do; and there have been criticisms of that. Some cities have developed right down on the river.

Doug said that the Salt Lake County Council asked that a committee be put together of all cities and other state and federal jurisdictions as well as citizen groups get together to create some kind of authority for the Jordan River. The original discussion of this committee (Doug said he was appointed to the committee for Murray City) was to create a special taxing district along the river that would allow citizens' property to be taxed and put into a fund to help hire staff, purchase property, and maintain and put in improvements on the Jordan River. There has been a lot of resistance to this, especially from the cities. Doug said the committee has now moved toward what is called a Jordan River Parkway Commission. He said this commission is an organization that has some authority (provided through an interlocal agreement) and would probably provide some funding to the commission that would allow them to hire staff and be able to advise cities and agencies about what should be done on the Jordan River. They would not have authority to tell cities what to do.

Doug provided the board with a copy of the proposal to create this commission. Doug said that the proposal is an outline of the goals and responsibilities and structure of the commission. Doug said Murray City has reviewed it as staff, and included in the handout to the board was a memo to Mayor Snarr from Doug Hill outlining some recommendations.

Doug reported that Murray City

- does not want to give up any authority in regard to land use, funding, maintenance, development, etc.
- believes the creation of the commission is too large.
- believes that, initially, elected officials should be on the committee.
- is concerned about language that moves toward a special taxing district.
- believes that it is a good idea to have a commission focusing solely on the Jordan River
- wants the group to be an advisory group.

Morgan Selph said that he felt there were two things lacking that the city is proposing to take away—that is the funding and the authority to do anything. He said he felt that the river is in the condition that it is because it is everybody's playground. He said he felt that the commission should be given some authority so that there could be consistency along the river.

Doug said that eventually the commission could evolve into having more authority and funding, but initially the city is skeptical of taking the big leap of giving authority and funding all at the same time through a special taxing district. Doug said there are some cities who have a very different vision for the river; some cities would like to see commercial development on the river. Doug said that eventually there will be an interlocal agreement come before the City Council and the board; he wanted to make the board members aware of what was happening now.

USE OF ARMORY BUILDING IN MURRAY PARK

Doug told the board members that he would like them to start thinking about potential uses for the armory building. He said that many groups have expressed an interest in the building, i.e., people who

want to use it for batting cages, the symphony would like to use it for a rehearsal facility, church groups want to use it for storage of floats, etc. Doug said that currently it is just a big open building; there are some walls dividing it into three areas. There are no utilities in the building at this time.

Doug said that he has talked with the Mayor, who has some very strong feelings about what he would like done with the building. Doug reported that the Mayor would like to see it turned into a community multipurpose center. The Mayor does not want to compete with the private sector. Possibly, the city could use it for classroom space, the arts groups could use it for rehearsals, it could be used for a luncheon. It would like to see the space be available to the public on a rental type of arrangement. Doug reported that the Mayor is not interested in a dog park, a skate park, or a special use facility for sports. Doug said that the building does need renovation, and it would qualify for CDBG funding. He said that currently the proposed use of the building has not been shared with the council or the public and would need to go through that process.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Doug said that he didn't have anything further to comment on, but said that traditionally the Parks & Recreation Board does not meet in December. He said that unless someone had an issue to discuss, and board members were in agreement, that the December meeting would be cancelled.

The next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, January 13, 2010, at 5:30pm in the Parks & Recreation conference room.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.